



CITY OF BLOOMINGTON
parks and recreation

2015 Community Gardening Program Organic Guidelines

Bloomington Parks and Recreation encourages all gardeners gardening at both the Willie Streeter Community Gardens and Butler Park Community Gardens to follow these guidelines. We require all gardeners gardening in organic plots to do so.

Thank you for your cooperation in making our gardens safe and healthy for all participants. These are basic guidelines. For more detailed information on gardening organically please contact the Garden staff at (812) 349-3704, communitygardens@bloomington.in.gov or during the Garden Hours at the gardens.

The National Organic Standards Board defines organic gardening as “an ecological production management system that promotes and enhances biodiversity, biological cycles, and soil biological activity. It is based on minimal use of off-farm inputs and on management practices that restore, maintain and enhance ecological harmony.”

Organic gardening emphasizes working with nature, soil building, preventing problems before they occur, and using only natural, non-toxic or minimally toxic substances if intervention is required.

FERTILIZERS

Organic compost is an exceptional fertilizer. It provides nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium, as well as other elements (calcium, magnesium, sulfur, and micronutrients). Furthermore, compost aerates soil, breaks up clay, binds together sand, improves drainage, prevents erosion, neutralizes toxins, holds precious moisture, releases essential nutrients, and feeds the microbiotic life of the soil.

Below are recommended fertilizers (followed by N-nitrogen, P-phosphorus, or K-potassium representing the three major plant nutrients provided by each fertilizer) that may be used; followed by prohibited fertilizers.

Recommended Fertilizers

Organic compost (N, P, K)

Animal manures (ideally composted or aged before use) (N)

Alfalfa meal (N)

Blood meal (N)

Hoof and horn meal (N)

Kelp or seaweed (liquid or powder) (N)

Fish emulsion (N, P)

Rock phosphate (P)

Soft phosphate (colloidal) (P)

Bone meal (P)

Wood ashes (K)

Granite or feldspar dust (K)

Greensand (K)

(More on reverse)

Prohibited Fertilizers

Synthetic fertilizers of any kind (e.g. Miracle Gro)
Any formulations containing sewage sludge (e.g. Milorganite)
DAP and MAP (ammonium phosphates)
Chilean Nitrate
Superphosphate (acidulated phosphates)
Chilean Nitrate of Potash (15-0-14)
Muriate of Potash, KCl, (0-0-60)
Charcoal ashes (from outdoor grills, for example)
Cigarette ashes

PESTICIDES

Organic methods promote a healthy ecosystem where birds, insects, plants, microorganisms, and people all reach a natural balance that is beneficial for all. The first line of pest control for the organic grower should be a careful evaluation and maximization of the soil and nutrients for a plant. Good compost and loose, rich soil are often the best solutions for pests. Make sure plants receive enough water and sunlight, choose plants that grow well in this part of the world, utilize companion plantings and rotate crops. All of these considerations can help prevent insect problems.

Below are recommended and not recommended (but permitted, with caution) pest controls that may be used when there are still problems despite trying the methods listed above; followed by prohibited pest control substances.

Recommended

Beneficial insects (ladybugs, praying mantids, trichogramma wasps, lacewings, tachinid and syrphid flies, etc.)
Hand-picking
Traps (pheromone, sticky, water, food, etc.)
Row covers
Spraying with garlic, onion or vegetable oil, and pepper sprays
Insecticidal soaps (preferably biodegradable soap solutions)
BT (bacillus thuringiensis)
Chitin
Diatomaceous earth
Bicarbonates (sodium bicarbonate – baking soda, and potassium bicarbonate)
Sulfur
Isopropyl alcohol
Hydrogen Peroxide

Not Recommended

Neem
Pyrethrum
Quassia
Ryania
Sabadilla

Prohibited

Synthetic pesticides, insecticides or fungicides of any kind (Bug B Gon, Captan, Diazinon, Insectagon, Kelthane, Lindane, Malathion, Permethrin, Sevin, Thuricide, etc.)
Nicotine in any form
Formulations containing copper (e.g., Bordeaux Mix)
Rotenone
Pyrethroids (synthetic pyrethrum)

Synthetic herbicides of any kind are prohibited (Preen, Roundup, Weed-B-Gon, etc.)